CHARTER AND REGULATIONS

OF

THE ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

PREAMBLE:

1. WHEREAS most of the world's religions seem to have sprung: from the profound spiritual and psychic experiences of the especially gifted persons who were their founders, and

2. WHEREAS unusual spiritual and psychic experiences; both spontaneous and induced, still occur on a significant scale among mankind, and

3. WHEREAS the religious institutions of the world have generally adopted a dogmatic, that is, a static normative attitude toward the nature and value of these experiences, and

4. WHEREAS this dogmatic institutional attitude is usually negative toward deeper and more unusual experiences because these are apt to be insight-bestowing, creative events which arouse a prophetic challenge to priestly absolutes, and

5. WHEREAS the slowness (yet sureness) with which psychical research (also known as parapsychology) is being accepted as a science by scientists. And as a nonreductionistic enquiry by religionists, has so limited the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge in this field that it is usually found thus far only in small groups and in isolated individuals, and

6. WHEREAS the philosophic blind spots of academics toward the open-minded study of religion, both on the part of theists and atheists, are historically among the most difficult problems confronting the individual academic concerned with research in this area, and

7. WHEREAS the academic world is usually unresponsive to a new field of enquiry until a sufficiently large and respectable body of scholars recognize and champion the field, and

8. WHEREAS truly effective scientific enquiry on any broad scale into the basic psychic phenomenology of religion will probably require the "critical mass” of a highly-motivated, self-conscious organization of academic seekers that is open and informed about both religion and science, and

9, WHEREAS a tide of interest in spiritual and psychic experience is rising in this society among religious persons (dissatisfied with sterile dogmatisms) and among scholars who are intrigued by the creative insights into the nature of reality that are apparently granted by psychical research, and

10. WHEREAS the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, an organization to restore in a wise and informed manner the full range of psychic reality the life of the religious

institutions, believes that the moment has now arrived when a federation of scholars concerned with both religion and psychical research must be launched, in order to overcome the problems faced by scholars in this area and In order to take advantage of the increasingly favorable cultural situation that is developing for research in this area,

THEREFORE: Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship*, by its Executive Council on October 27, 1972, created as its independent affiliate, The Academy of Religion and Psychical Research, which shall be governed by the following REGULATIONS:

ARTICLE 1. PURPOSES – The principal thrust of the Academy will be three-fold: First, to encourage dialog, exchange of ideas and cooperation between clergy and academics of religion and philosophy on the one hand, and on the other hand, scientists, researchers and academics of all scientific disciplines, and in the fields of psychical research and new disciplines as well as the humanistic historic sciences; Second, to conduct an education program for the scholars just-identified, for the S.F.F. membership and for the general public, blending data already available in the area of their common interest with the interchange of views stimulated in these scholars, to the end that both the scientific and religious communities may be better informed as to such facts and views, and as to the propriety, value and respectability of same; Third, to work closely with, and offer good offices to, all reputable organizations having related interests in the fields of education, religion, science and psychical research.

ARTICLE 2. PROGRAMS – The Academy will endeavor to sponsor Conferences and Symposia for the presentation of scholarly data and points of view and interchange of ideas in the area where religion and psychical research interface. The Academy will endeavor to publish papers resulting from such meetings, as well as other appropriate materials on this area that will be of interest to academics, scientists and clergy. The Academy will monitor, evaluate, explain and report on significant data of this area for the benefit of scholars wishing to be informed of same.

ARTICLE 3. ORGANIZATION –

A. Board of Trustees. The governing body of the Academy shall be a Board of Trustees composed of not less than 10 nor more than 30 members. The Trustees shall be persons of academic stature holding a post-graduate degree, or the equivalent in outstanding activity relevant to the interests of the Academy. Trustees shall serve three-year terms (the first Board shall be composed of three classes, approximately equal in number, to serve one, two and three years, respectively): The Trustees shall be the only voting members of the Academy; they shall serve without compensation, but the Board shall fix per diem and travel allowances as reimbursement for attendance at meetings and scheduled events. The Board of Trustees shall meet (upon reasonable notice given) at such times and places as the Board shall designate. The Board may create committees from among its members (such as for publications and for programs) with authority to carry out specific functions. Sixty percent of the members of the Board shall be elected by the Executive Council of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship; the remaining 40% shall

be elected by the Board. Incumbent Trustees may be re-elected for additional terms. The President of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship and its Chairman of Colleges and Seminaries Committee shall be ex-officio, voting members of the Board of Trustees. The Board shall elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secy-Treasurer, Executive Secretary and such other officers as it may deem appropriate from among its members.

B. General Membership. The Academy shall have two grades of non-voting members; membership dues shall be as stated below, subject to change by the Board from time-to-time. The Board may designate rates and prices for specific services and materials offered and may, in its discretion, allow special rates to members.

   a. Academic Members – Academic religionists who are involved in research or teaching, or who have proper terminal degrees (such as Ph.D., Th.D., St.D. and sometimes St.M. and M.A.). Also, academically or otherwise qualified psychical researchers, behavioral and humanistic psychologists and other academics who are contributing to research knowledge.

   b. Supporting Members – Other interested persons who may wish to attend conferences and meetings, receive printed materials, and are desirous of helping finance the work of the Academy. Dues, $15.00 annually.

ARTICLE 4. FINANCES – As an Affiliate created by Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, all donations to the Academy shall be made to S.F.F. and on that basis will be tax-exempt. The S.F.F. Executive Council has assured the Board that all donations made for the benefit of the Academy will be held separately for use by the Academy. The Board shall, from time-to-time, present its budget to the S.F.F. Executive Council (through the S.F.F. Budget Committee) for approval.

The above CHARTER and REGULATIONS of THE ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH are hereby adopted by its Board of Trustees on this the 2nd day of December, 1973.

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*Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, Inc., is a national, non-profit, religious organization, incorporated 1n 1956 under the laws of the State of Illinois and granted tax-exempt status by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. S.F.F. was formed “to sponsor, explore, and interpret the growing interest in psychic phenomena and mystical experience, within the historic church, wherever these experiences relate to effective prayer, spiritual healing and personal survival”.

THE ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH was established October 27, 1972 by the Executive Council of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, as an Affiliate of SFF, for the purpose of (1) encouraging dialog between clergy and academics of religion on the one hand and parapsychologists and interested scientists on the other, (2) conducting an educational program blending existing data with the interchange of views stimulated in these scholars, and (3) working closely with organizations having related interests in fields of education, religion, science and psychical research. These purposes will be carried out through the sponsorship of conferences and symposia, publications and reportorial services.

Already having provisional existence under the guidance of an Ad Hoc Steering Committee previously appointed by the SFF Executive Council, the Academy laid-on its First Scholar's Conference for registrants and (in part) for the public Nob.-Dec. 2, 1972, at Evanston, Ill., co-hosted by Garrett Theological Seminary. The Conference featured parapsychologists Dr. Karlis Osis, Mr. Douglas Dean and Dr. Lawrence LeShan, theologians Dr. Dennis E. Groh, Dr. Clyde L. Manschreck, Dr. Egon W. Gerdes, Dr. Ernest Larkin, and Dr. Philip S. Watson, religion teachers Dr. J. Shoneberg Setzer and Dr. Robert Ellwood, and SFF officers Rev. Lawrence Althouse (Pres.) and Rev. Gordon Melton. The first volume of Proceedings from that Conference is expected momentarily. The Second Scholars' Conference is scheduled for Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 1973, at Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, Boston, and a mini-conference at Claremont Theological Seminary, Los Angeles to be co-sponsored by the Academy of Parapsychology & Medicine in March or April, 1974.

On May 16, 1973, the SFF Executive Council elected the following as the first compliment of the Academy's Board of Trustees: Dr. Karlis Osis, ARPR, Dr. George A. Maloney, Fordham U., Dr. Ellery B. Haskell, Albright Coll., Rev. Richard Woods, Loyola U., Frank C. Tribbe, SFF, E. Douglas Dean, Newark Coll. Engr., Dr. Donna L. Hensler, Mt. Marty Coll., Dr. Robert Ellwood, U.S.C., Dr. J. Schoneberg Setzer, Hartwick Coll., Rev. J. Gordon Melton, Northwestern U., Robert Ashby, SFF, Rev. Lawrence Althouse, Pres., SFF (ex officio), and Rev. L. Richard Batzler, Chairman, Coll. & Seminaries Committee, SFF (ex officio). The balance of the trustees will be elected by the Board when its first meeting is held conjunctively with the Second Scholars' Conference in Boston; its organization will be completed at that time.

For membership information and general information about the Academy, inquires may be addressed to Rev. Melton, Corresponding Secretary pro tem, 800 Custer Ave., Evanston, Ill. 60202